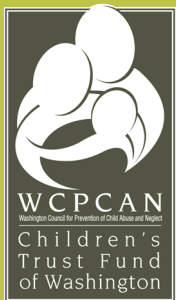
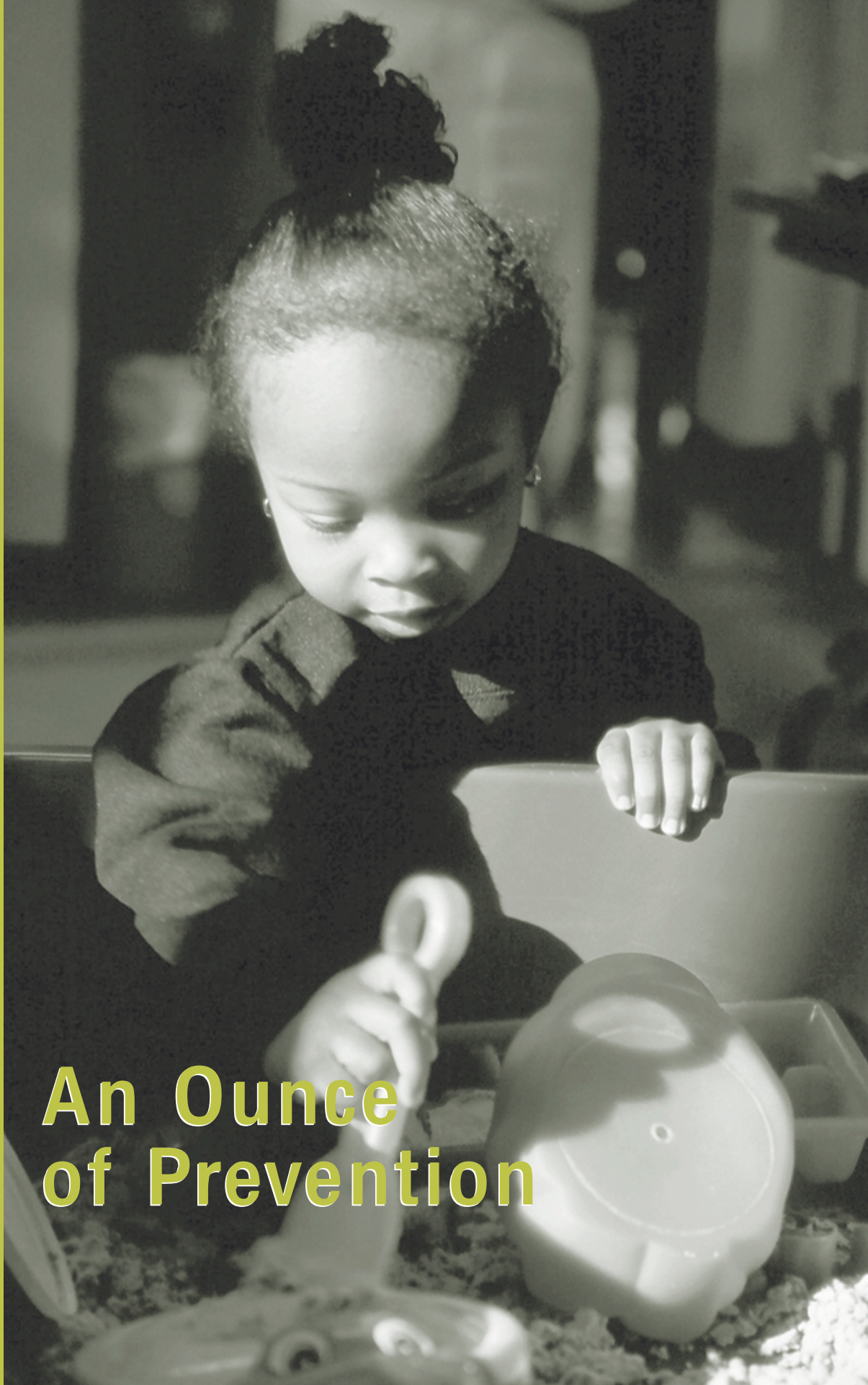


A Report
from the
Washington
Council
for Prevention
of Child Abuse
and Neglect

2004



An Ounce of Prevention





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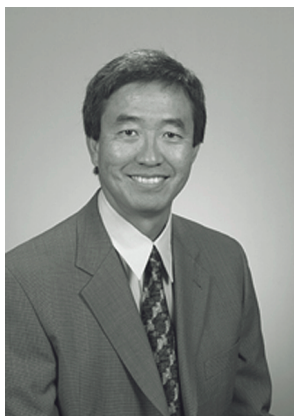
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Debra Williams-Appleton, OSPI

Tory Clarke Henderson, DOH



Dear Friends of Children:

The Washington Council for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect / Children's Trust Fund of Washington has been leading prevention efforts in our state for over 20 years.

This report outlines the state of child abuse and neglect prevention in Washington today. In facts and figures, it paints the picture of what is being done, why, and to what result. It also suggests some opportunities that lie ahead.

I am a pediatrician at Harborview Medical Center and the University of Washington School of Medicine. As a scientist, I insist on data to make decisions. This report provides that data. But as a father and a physician, I know that feelings are important as well. I feel strongly that Washington can and must do more to strengthen families. I feel strongly that we must take much more seriously our shared responsibility to future generations to ensure them opportunities for healthy, productive lives. Acting on the data to accomplish this is child abuse prevention.

If you are not convinced that Washington needs to do more to strengthen families so they can better protect their children, come spend a day with me at Harborview.

Thank you for putting some time aside to review this report. The future of the children in Washington State depends on all of us better understanding what the stakes are and the possible solutions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kyle E. Yasuda M.D." The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kyle Yasuda, MD
Chair, WCPCAN Council
Pediatrician, Harborview Medical Center / University of Washington
School of Medicine, Seattle



Executive Summary

The Washington Council for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (WCPCAN) / Children's Trust Fund of Washington's 2004 Ounce of Prevention report articulates the successful efforts being made to strengthen Washington's communities through child abuse prevention. The report also provides the rationale for how this investment supports families in protecting and nurturing their children. The report details the following.

WCPCAN's unique structure & purpose

An office of the Governor created by citizen action in 1982, WCPCAN maintains a sharp focus on child abuse and neglect prevention. With the Children's Trust Fund of Washington, which it manages, and a governance body made up of citizens, state agency directors and representatives of each of the four legislative caucuses, WCPCAN is uniquely structured to maximize accountability, system integration, policy linkage, and the ability to attract private sector investment.

Principal strategies

WCPCAN concentrates its efforts in four primary areas:

- **Increasing public awareness and understanding.** The nationally recognized Shaken Baby Syndrome prevention campaign and community engagement efforts including Child Abuse Prevention Month and Children's Day are examples of the statewide leadership WCPCAN provides to increase public understanding and awareness of child abuse and neglect.
- **Providing knowledge and tools.** In order to build capacity for more effective practice, programs and policies, WCPCAN collects, synthesizes and communicates research information; provides technical assistance; offers

educational and training opportunities; and publishes an electronic newsletter and other materials highly valued by practitioners, program planners, and policy makers in the field.

- **Investing in effective programs.** WCPCAN seeks to reduce child abuse and neglect in Washington by identifying and investing in community-based programs with high potential to deliver, measure and document desired outcomes. Jane Reisman, Ph.D., one of the state's most highly regarded evaluation consultants, details the 'best practice' approach to outcome evaluation that has led receipt of a WCPCAN grant to become the 'gold standard' for prevention programs in Washington. Examples of outcome reports from several community-based programs in which WCPCAN has invested demonstrate the impact of the research-based approaches WCPCAN supports: home-visiting services, parent education, parent support, and crisis nurseries.
- **Leveraging resources through partnerships and collaboration.** WCPCAN's strong partnerships and collaborative relationships help leverage impact and resources for child abuse and neglect prevention in Washington. Examples of WCPCAN's current initiatives involving numerous public and private partners include the Washington State Fathering Coalition and the Respite and Crisis Care Coalition of Washington.

Basis in research

Research has established the link between child abuse and neglect and negative outcomes, including higher risks for mental illness, poor physical health, substance abuse, school failure, and crime.

Research regarding ‘what works’ provides the basis for WCPCAN’s investment and capacity-building strategies. The report provides examples of how these strategies are being implemented by community-based agencies across the state, along with the evaluation methodology used to quantify program impact and the results achieved.

Cost effectiveness

Research has provided some reliable measurements of the cost effectiveness of prevention. However, it is a significant challenge to accurately measure and quantify the impact of effective prevention over the long term. In spite of the measurement challenge, the bottom line is clear: effective prevention saves money -- and lives.

Challenges and opportunities

While the current environment presents certain challenges, there are also clear opportunities. Among these are:

- Continuing to build on the solid foundation provided by recent advances in prevention science.
- Using a strengths-based approach in designing services and systems in order to empower – rather than undermine – families’ ability to care for and protect their children.
- Integrating systems that serve at-risk families to ensure services and supports address family needs more holistically and recognize the special needs of children
- Thinking long term – both to address the multigenerational nature of much abuse and neglect, but also in recognition of the time it may take for today’s investments to realize their full cost benefit.

- The increasing focus on results and efficiency provides a powerful rationale for increased investment in effective prevention. While some say the state can no longer afford the luxury of prevention, no one stands to benefit more from an aggressive prevention agenda than taxpayers and the state government they support.
- Doing business differently. Citizen demand for results can work to support an increased focus on prevention and also help spur the cross-system work and deep community partnerships essential to effectively protecting children and strengthening families.

The WCPCAN Ounce of Prevention report is intended to stimulate policy discussion regarding ways in which Washington can enhance its current efforts to protect children – a cause worth of our best effort. Additional copies are available at www.wcpcan.gov.



Washington's Leadership in Child Abuse Prevention

What Makes WCPCAN Unique

When Governor John Spellman signed House Bill 179 into law in 1982, Washington became the first state in the nation to create a separate agency solely dedicated to the prevention of child abuse. HB 179 created the Washington Council for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (WCPCAN), and was the result of a three year, citizen-led, statewide grassroots lobbying effort. Citizen



advocates for children were convinced that Washington could and should do more to protect children from harm rather than putting all of its efforts into after-the-fact responses.

In the following years, many states followed our lead. Washington maintains the distinction, however, of having created not an ordinary government agency, but a private/public partnership that brings together legislators, citizen advocates for children, and child-serving agencies,

all under the aegis of the Office of the Governor. In addition, a separate Children's Trust Fund attracts private sector investments that help to extend the reach of prevention efforts.

The unique purpose and structure envisioned by its creators remains a WCPCAN distinction today:

Focus

WCPCAN focuses on primary child abuse prevention – stopping problems before they happen.

Accountability

Accountability resides with citizens: the parents, business leaders and child advocates who make up the majority of voting Council membership.

RCW 43.121.010 – Legislative declaration, intent.

The legislature recognizes that child abuse and neglect is a threat to the family unit and imposes major expenses on society. The legislature further declares that there is a need to assist private and public agencies in identifying and establishing community based educational and service programs for the prevention of child abuse and neglect. It is the intent of the legislature that an increase in prevention programs will help reduce the breakdown in families and thus reduce the need for state intervention and state expense. It is further the intent of the legislature that prevention of child abuse and child neglect programs are partnerships between communities, citizens, and the state.

System integration

Cross system integration is ensured through representation of the state's Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Department of Health, and the Department of Social and Health Services on the Council.

Policy linkage

Policy linkage is built in through Council representation from each legislative caucus – Senate and House Republicans and Democrats.

Private sector investment

The Children's Trust Fund, managed by the WCPCAN Council, provides a way for private citizens to directly contribute to the cause, above and beyond what their tax dollars support.

Through partnerships, public awareness campaigns, building and sharing a knowledge base, and providing resources, WCP CAN serves as a multiplying force to help everyone involved in child abuse prevention be more effective. Because of WCP CAN's work, we have more effective public policies and better local prevention programs.

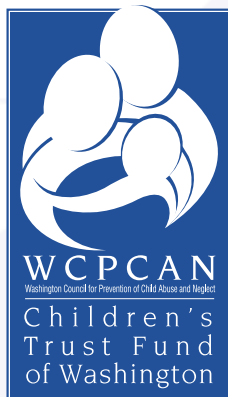
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For these are all our children. We will either benefit by or pay for whatever they become.

— James Baldwin

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Why It Matters



The challenge of preventing child abuse and neglect remains significant. The numbers show that child abuse and neglect remain a significant problem in Washington and across the nation:

- > There were 6000 child victims of substantiated abuse in 2001 in Washington.
- > 6,133 children were removed from their Washington homes in 2001 as a result of child maltreatment.

Maltreatment can have serious lifelong consequences for the children who experience it.

Experiencing child abuse significantly increases risk for:

- Substance abuse
- Criminal activity
- Health and mental health problems
- School failure
- Violent behavior
- Teen pregnancy

Our Mission

To provide leadership to and a statewide focus on the prevention of child abuse and neglect, and to encourage and support effective community prevention efforts.

In the field of child abuse prevention, leadership begins with careful monitoring of a vast world of scientific research about what works, about the long-term effects of abuse and neglect, and about how children's brains and personalities develop.

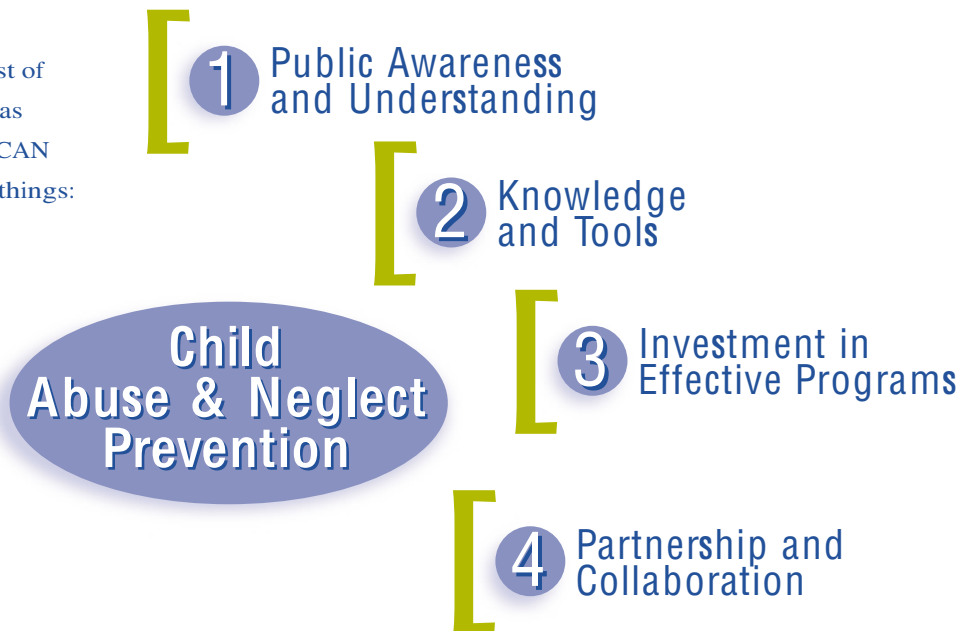
In the years since WPCAN was created, this world of research has produced dramatic gains in our understanding of the stakes and the challenges of effective prevention efforts:

- Research has created reliable evidence of what works in child abuse prevention.
- Brain science has opened our eyes to the opportunities – and potential for lifelong impairment – that nurture, or its absence, in early childhood represents.



Our Focus

To make the most of what research has taught us, WPCAN focuses on four things:



[1] Public Awareness and Understanding

Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention

With its primary partner, Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center, WCPCAN leads Washington's Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) prevention efforts – a public information and communication outreach campaign regarding the dangers of shaking young infants and children. The campaign came about as a result of legislation WCPCAN advocated for and the Legislature passed in 1993.



While incidence of Shaken Baby remains unacceptably high, the Shaken Baby Prevention campaign has made significant headway. Now, every family with a newborn in Washington receives information about the risks from shaking a young child. Trainings have measurably improved knowledge about SBS in front line workers who interact with new parents. Plus, the memorable image developed early on in the campaign was adopted by several other states to promote their efforts.

The Blue Ribbon Campaign & Children's Day

Besides our work on Shaken Baby Syndrome prevention, WCPCAN leads a statewide child abuse prevention campaign – the Blue Ribbon campaign -- that peaks in April, national Child Abuse Prevention Month. The Blue Ribbon campaign leverages hundreds of local efforts into one clear message: Keep Kids Safe.

WCPCAN raises grassroots awareness of child abuse and neglect prevention through promotion of Washington State Children's Day in October to honor children and the contributions they make to their communities. Our promotion of Children's Day focuses on child health, safety and outreach to special populations, particularly communities of color and tribes.

Some highlights:

- In 2003, the Longview Daily News highlighted the Blue Ribbon campaign with a full page promotion that included providing blue ribbons for every reader.
- Thirty five out of 39 Washington counties participated in child abuse prevention month activities in 2002.
- The Snoqualmie Tribe's Children's Day event hosts traditional storytellers, dance groups, drumming demonstrations, arts and crafts, a children's Pow Wow, and a community dinner. The youth council assists with the event planning.

Free resources for your community's Child Abuse Prevention Month efforts are available on the WCPCAN website, www.wcpcan.wa.gov.

Why a Blue Ribbon?

During the last several years, the blue ribbon has become a widely recognized symbol of child abuse prevention. The movement began in Norfolk, Virginia, when Grandmother Bonnie Finney decided to take a stand against child abuse after the death of her grandson. She tied a blue ribbon to her car's antenna as a signal to her community of her personal commitment to stop child abuse. The spirit of her blue ribbon grew and inspired a nationwide effort to join forces in this battle.

Why the color blue? So she would never forget the bruised body of her grandchild.



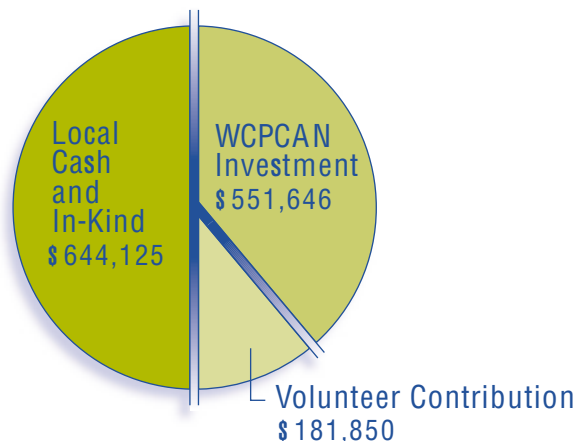
[2 Knowledge and Tools

Building Capacity

WCPCAN is recognized both statewide and nationally for our capacity-building strategies benefiting community-based programs. We operate from the assumption that sustainability is dependent on accountability. We work in partnership with our funded programs to develop their technical abilities and their understanding of the value of evaluation. We believe programs that develop these capacities will not only continue to improve and strengthen, but will be able to sustain their efforts on behalf of vulnerable children and families long after direct support from WCPCAN has ended.

Every program in which WCPCAN invests receives a wide array of technical assistance. WCPCAN contracts with nationally-recognized evaluation experts Organizational Research Services to ensure that every program receiving funding also receives ongoing assistance to develop expertise in measuring outcomes.

Resources Leveraged from WCPCAN Investment 2002



The WCPCAN Approach to Evaluation: A Best Practice

How do you know if a family copes better with life stresses, understands a child's development or has a supportive social network?

These are the types of interim outcomes, or protective factors, that programs preventing child abuse and neglect hold themselves accountable to. Each program contributes a specific impact that strengthens families or improves parenting so that children are better off.

While there is no single cause-and-effect relationship, there are numerous protective factors that collectively help insure that children are safe from abuse and neglect. As a steward of family support and child abuse and neglect prevention, the Washington Council for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect has developed a steadfast expectation that programs demonstrate their contribution to these larger goals.

Over the past decade, WCPCAN has developed a "best practice" approach to building the capacity of community programs to identify and measure achievable outcomes and to use this information to strengthen their program delivery. They understand the need for public entities to hold themselves accountable to their mission by regular monitoring of progress toward results. At the same time, they recognize the importance of supporting community programs in developing their skills in identifying, measuring and using program outcome data.

WCPCAN's support to agencies in developing their capacity for self-evaluation facilitates sustainability beyond their WCPCAN grant and provides regular assurance that scarce public resources are most efficiently focused on desirable outcomes.

WCPCAN's 'best practice' moves accountability in government beyond counting numbers of people served to the question of what difference a program is making to children and families. This type of outcome measurement for accountability and program improvement should not be mistaken for large-scale, longitudinal basic research which provides more rigorous evidence of the "merit and worth" of particular strategies. These merit and worth-type of studies are time-intensive, expensive and out of reach to the "regular" business of government.

WCPCAN's approach models a realistic, practical and strategic response to using data to focus program activities on achievable results, based on the best research available about the types of service strategies that are most promising for supporting families and keeping children safe.

Jane Reisman
Jane Reisman, Ph.D.

Organizational Research Services and The Evaluation Forum

A Source of Expertise

WCPCAN collects, analyzes, synthesizes and communicates research information to service providers, policy makers and others to promote effective child abuse prevention programs, practices and policies. WCPCAN is a recognized expert and resource to individuals and organizations across Washington State. Each year, we field hundreds of calls from people looking for information about everything from how to contact Child Protective Services to models of successful systemic change initiatives across the country. Each request gets a rapid and thorough response from our staff.

Making sure service providers throughout the state have the most current knowledge and skills is a priority. WCPCAN collaborates with many agencies to develop and increase accessibility to high quality training across the state. We also provide scholarships for practitioners to obtain

training in current best practices and sponsor conferences and workshops.

Our bi-monthly electronic newsletter, the “Resource Update,” is WCPCAN’s primary vehicle for delivering information about training, technical assistance and other capacity-building resources to community-based programs, key partners and other stakeholders. It includes a listing of training and funding opportunities, resources related to public education and awareness, and information on research, best practices and program development. In addition to voluntary e-mail distribution to a growing list of recipients, the Resource Update is also posted on the WCPCAN web site, enhancing community access.

Current and past copies of the Resource Update are available on the WCPCAN website, www.wcpkan.wa.gov.

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The Nooksack Center for Children and Families essentially started with two grants – one from the Even Start Family Literacy Program, and one from WCPCAN. The emphasis on outcomes for families that WCPCAN instilled put us on the right path of asking families how they’re doing, what they need and what they want.

The encouragement and technical assistance provided by WCPCAN enabled us to design strategies that had families directly involved in their own progress – together that makes a powerful program.

During our years in developing the Nooksack Center for Children and Families, what we discovered is that there is no one answer for strengthening families, there are many answers. And no one does this alone. We need help at the local level and agencies like WCPCAN provide invaluable technical assistance and support. It’s what we really need state leadership for.

”

Vicki Hubner; Director, Nooksack Center for Children and Families



Photo courtesy of flashlightimages.com

[3] Investment in Effective Programs

WCPCAN began making grants to communities committed to developing and sustaining effective child abuse prevention efforts in 1984. Since then, we have invested in the development of over 170 unique community-based programs. These programs were selected based on prevention research, standards of best practice, their ability to demonstrate program outcomes, and their capacity to leverage resources within their community.

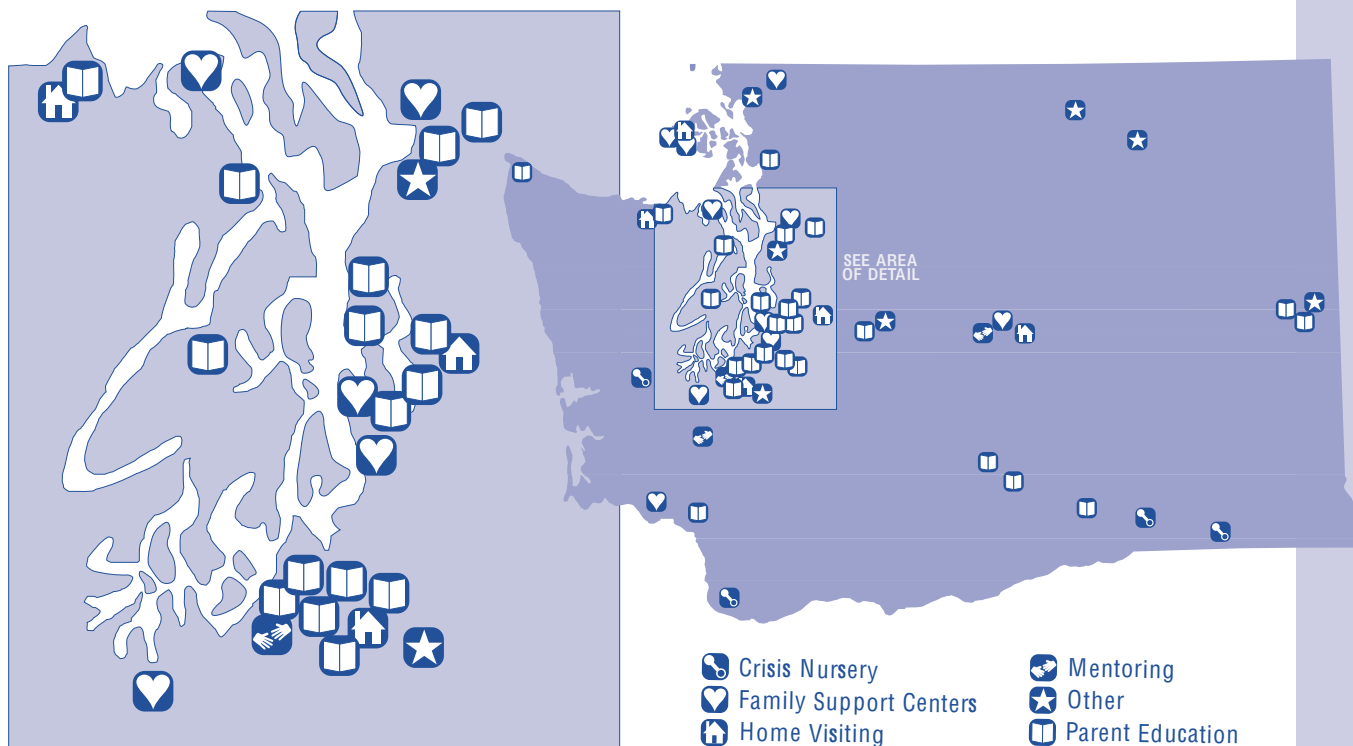
Because of the rigor of the grant application process and the high standards of our evaluation requirements, receiving WCPCAN funding is regarded as a gold standard for

prevention programs in Washington. Being selected for WCPCAN investment opens doors to private dollars for our grantees.

Based on the research of what works best to prevent child abuse and neglect, WCPCAN invests in the following types of programs:

- Home visitation programs that provide services to vulnerable families with infants and young children.
- Parent education programs that use a formal structure and curriculum to help parents develop and refine parenting skills.
- Parent support activities that provide parents a social support network and environment to increase positive parenting skills.
- Crisis nurseries that offer respite care and support to families in crisis.

WCPCAN Funded Programs 1996-2003



Research-driven Investment

The steadily growing body of research regarding effective prevention of child abuse and neglect drives WPCAN's investment priorities. We also highly value the capacity of community-based programs to report program outcomes to ensure that state dollars invested in prevention services are producing real results.

The outcomes we seek are based on eight protective factor goals which research shows make the most difference in determining a child's chances for growing up in a protective environment. Programs that develop and support these protective factors have the greatest chance of preventing child abuse and strengthening families.

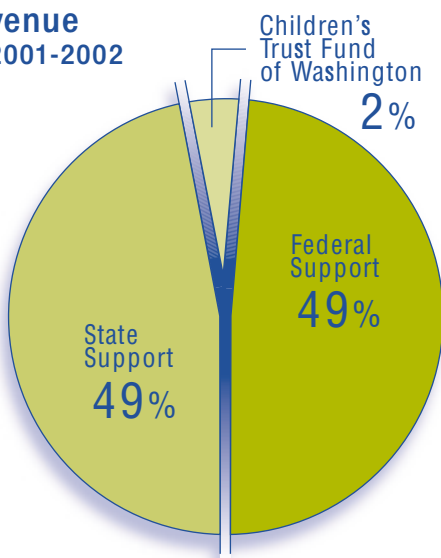
The programs we invest in must address and achieve positive outcomes in at least one of the protective factor goals areas:

Protective Factors

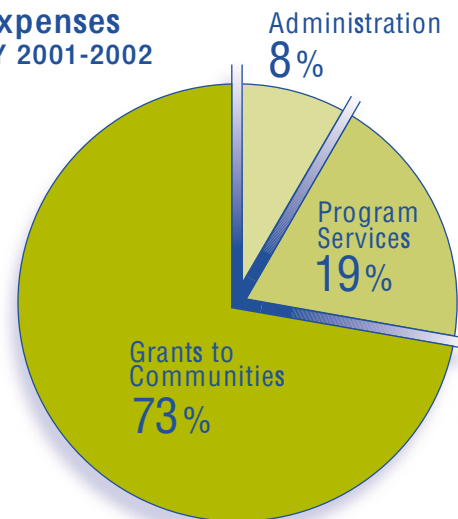
- > Nurturing & bonding
- > Responsive social network
- > Knowledge of child development
- > Effective problem solving
- > Effective communication
- > Non-punitive discipline and guidance
- > Life management skills
- > Stress management

By supporting research-based community programs, WPCAN takes an active role in front-line prevention that has far-reaching effects.

Revenue
FY 2001-2002



Expenses
FY 2001-2002



“

The real question is how to use the available funds wisely. The best evidence supports the policy prescription: Invest in the Very Young.

— James Heckman, Ph.D., Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences

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Experiencing child abuse increases risk of alcohol and substance abuse.

A strong link exists between negative childhood experiences and illicit drug use later in life. The greater the number of negative events experienced, the more likely the individual is to initiate drug use at an early age, have drug problems, be addicted to drugs, or use intravenous drugs in adulthood.

A WPCAN Investment

Central Washington Comprehensive Mental Health Strong Families/Familias Fuertes Program, Yakima

Strong Families/Familias Fuertes provides parent education classes throughout the Yakima Valley area. The curriculum is based on Dr. Marilyn Steele's "Strengthening Multi-Ethnic Families and Communities."

The Strong Families/Familias Fuertes evaluation shows results across six protective factors.

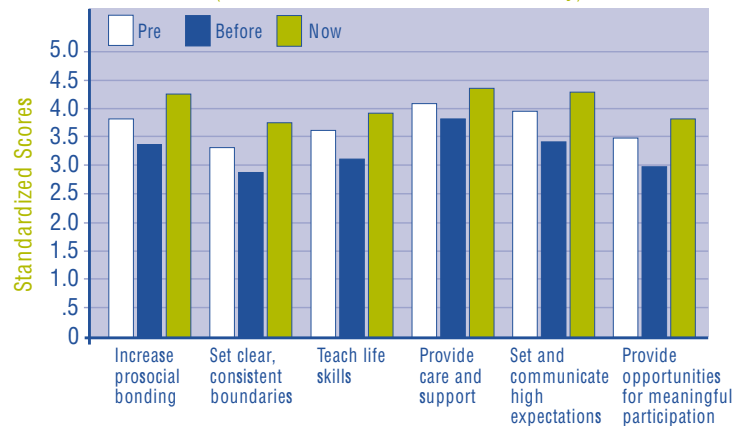
Because of these increases in the protective factors, the families served are considered less likely to experience negative outcomes, including drug and alcohol use/abuse.

One of the goals of parenting education is that parents leave the program with a raised level of consciousness about the parenting choices they are making. The observed change in the parents' self reports represents growth in their self awareness.

After completing the program, parents are able to

more realistically assess their parenting skills. As a result, they are better equipped to choose more appropriate types of parenting tools and techniques to influence their children's behavior.

Strong Families Evaluation Summary Chart
(WPCAN Outcomes – 3 Year Summary)



Protective Factors



Effective Communication

- > Identify and communicate needs and feelings
- > Increased ability to listen and understand the needs of their children
- > Active listening
- > Observation
- > Reflective listening
- > Know how to take a "time out" from an out of control situation
- > Appropriately manage anger and communicate this in a way others will listen and respond to appropriately
- > Teach children to be effective communicators

In 2002, Lt. Gov. Brad Owen presented representatives of the Central Washington Comprehensive Mental Health Strong Families/ Familias Fuertes Program and the Spokane County WSU Cooperative Extension Nurturing Program with the Washington State Exemplary Substance Abuse Prevention Award.

A substance abuse award for a child abuse prevention program? Effective child abuse prevention produces multiple benefits.

Child abuse increases chances of both juvenile and adult crime:

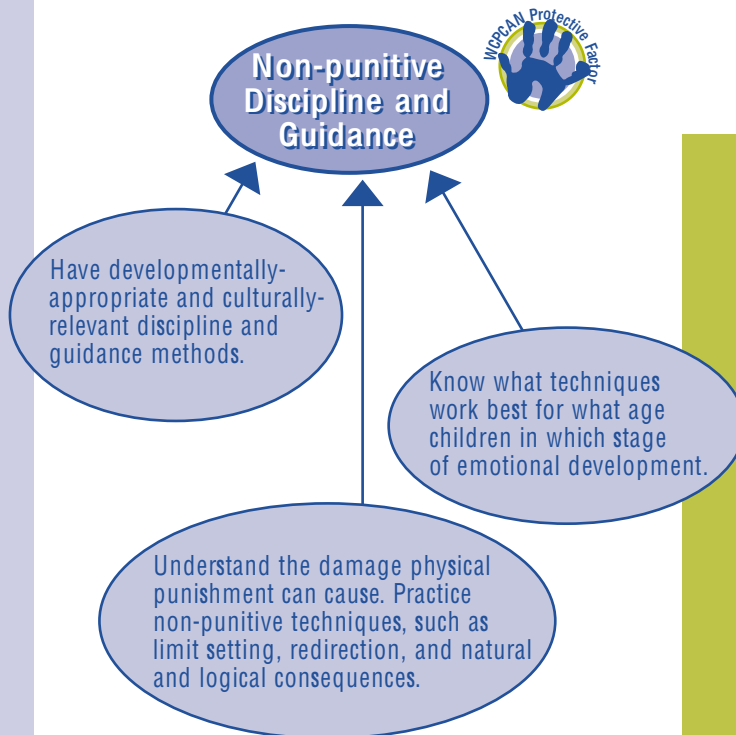


- Being maltreated puts a child at a high risk for juvenile delinquency. According to the University of Washington's noted researchers David Hawkins and Rick Catalano, inadequate parenting practices are among the most powerful predictors of early antisocial behavior.
- Youth who experienced maltreatment during childhood are significantly more likely to display a variety of problem behaviors during adolescence, including serious violent delinquency, teen pregnancy, drug use, low academic achievement, and mental health problems.
- Children who have suffered abuse or neglect are arrested four to eight times more often for juvenile crimes and are twice as likely to be arrested as adults.

A WPCAN Investment

WSU Cooperative Extension, Spokane Nurturing Programs, Spokane

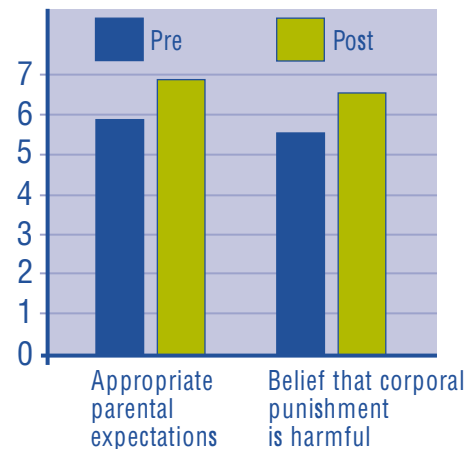
Spokane Nurturing Programs is a collaboration of four agencies each providing facilitators trained in "The Nurturing Program," a nationally recognized parenting curricula created by Dr. Stephen Bavolek. This program provides both parenting- and youth-focused curricula. Each week, a theme is introduced to both the parent's and children's groups, allowing families a shared learning experience.



Program Outcomes:

Non-punitive discipline and guidance

The program measures the change in beliefs about corporal punishment, a parenting attitude known to contribute to child abuse and neglect, as well as parental expectations about child behavior.



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My family of origin believes in strict discipline, including frequent spankings, with and without objects. This class demanded great thought from me every time I approached a discipline/punishment issue. Admittedly I struggled with this issue, being pulled towards less spanking by my in-laws and MORE spanking by my parents. Somewhere in the middle, I have made a small 'beachhead' for myself, establishing a tentative foothold in this new territory. The other techniques for discipline from the class material have given me more tools to use instead.

– Mother, retired military,
with three children ages two to five years old.

”

Child abuse increases the risk for school failure

The failures often start early and the consequences get increasingly dire.



- Young children who have been maltreated participate less in classroom activities, are less likely to be accepted by classmates and teachers, and receive less instruction. They are more likely to do poorly on academic tasks and more likely to be held back.
- A study of abused and neglected children found that they had lower grades, more suspensions, disciplinary referrals, grade repetitions, and were more likely to drop-out of school than their peers, independent of the effects of poverty.

A WPCAN Investment

Nooksack Valley School District Center for Children and Families Birth to Three Project, Nooksack, Whatcom County

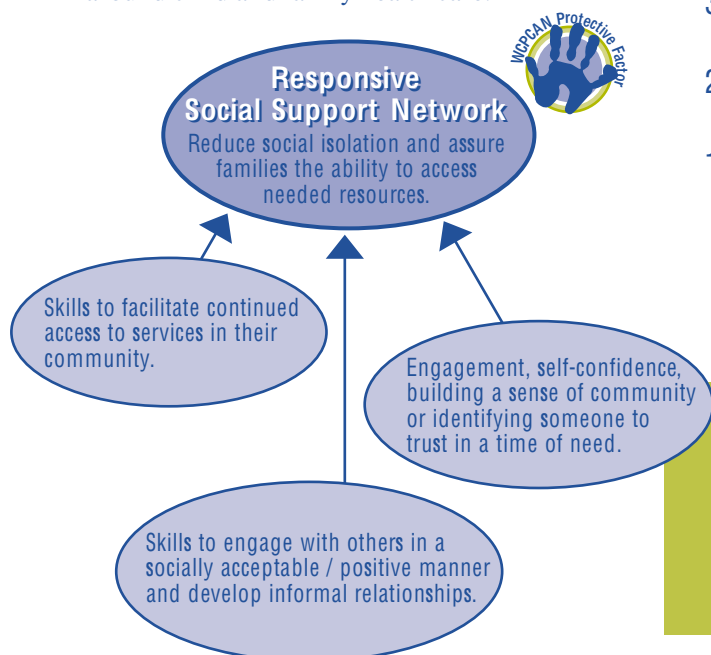
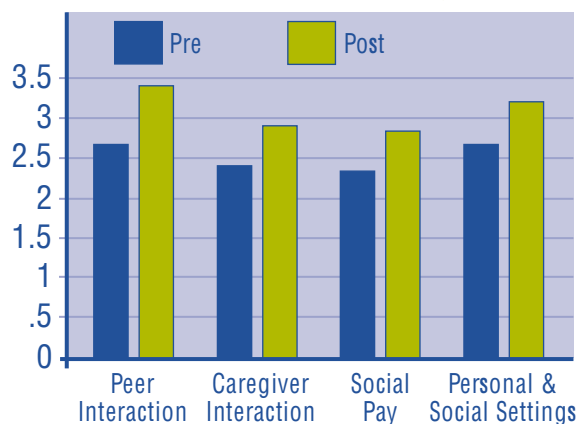
The Center for Children and Families was started in 1996 as the Family Learning Center with support from the local school district, community and a WPCAN grant. Today this award-winning family support center is based at Nooksack High School, the result of a commitment by the Nooksack School District to ensure that isolated rural families receive the services infants and young children need to be protected and prepared to enter school with every opportunity to succeed. On-site and outreach services focus on identification of children with developmental delays and issues around child and family health care.

Health Outcomes:

- 100% with insurance and a medical home
- 100% with access to dental care
- 100% current on immunizations
- 85% current on well-child visits

The Social Competence Checklist

Nooksack measures "Social Competence" in the children of parents attending Center programs with the following outcomes: The tool, "The Social Competence Checklist" with a scale of 1 (low) to 4 (high) was designed to illustrate growth in social skills of children over the year.



Nooksack – An Award-Winning Program

- 2001 National Community of Excellence Award
- Woodring College of Education Award for Professional Excellence
- Governor's Award - Early Learning Program State Model



Child abuse increases the risk for mental illness

- Maltreated children are 25% more likely to suffer from mental illness.
- Children who are physically abused are more likely to have suicidal thoughts, conduct disorder, a poor self-image and show signs of depression.

A WPCAN Investment Volunteers of America Protective Strategies for Teen Parents, Spokane

This project serves homeless teens in Spokane who are pregnant or parenting. Most of these teens suffer a significant history of family disruption including many themselves having been victims of abuse and neglect.

The program is based on attachment theory and the nationally recognized model of best-practice, The Circle of Security. Through the exploration of attachment issues, teen parents improve their self-awareness and confidence in responding to and communicating with their infants.

The Circle of Security protocol was nationally recognized as a Reported Effective Program by the US Department of Health and Human Services' Emerging Practices in the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.



Photo courtesy of flashlightimages.com

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I never bonded with (my daughter) in the beginning. She was so needy and I was just like, 'whatever.' I didn't want to hold her when she cried. I didn't want to pick her up. It was just her need. I hated it because I never got that. So when she wanted me to fulfill her need I couldn't. I didn't want to do it. I used to pass her off all the time like she wasn't even my kid. It really bugged me, I loved her but I didn't want her. At first I wanted her to go through what I did. I wanted other people to feel the way I did but now I realize that she deserves better than I got.

I feel like a better person. I know I'm doing better than my parents did and she'll turn out better than I am. I realize that she just wants me to pick her up because she wants to be with me. Now how I get fulfilled is by fulfilling her needs.

I hope that we break the cycle that my family has had and I hope that she learns that people are not out to get her and she can come to me. Because I know I could never go to my parents and that's why I went to whoever would take me...and I really regret it. I don't want my daughter to go through that. I don't want her to be sleeping around with a bunch of guys because she thinks that's the only way she can get love. I want her to know that she can come to me with anything and I'll support her.

— A teen mom served by the Volunteer of America Program

”



Nuturing and Bonding

Parents and caretakers to respond appropriately to the basic needs of their babies and young children.

Understanding sleep needs, attending to routine health needs and knowing when to seek help for serious health concerns.

Proper nutrition, breast feeding, cuddling, and touching babies and young children.

Listening to and differentiating child cries and other forms of communication.



Child abuse and neglect interferes with healthy brain development

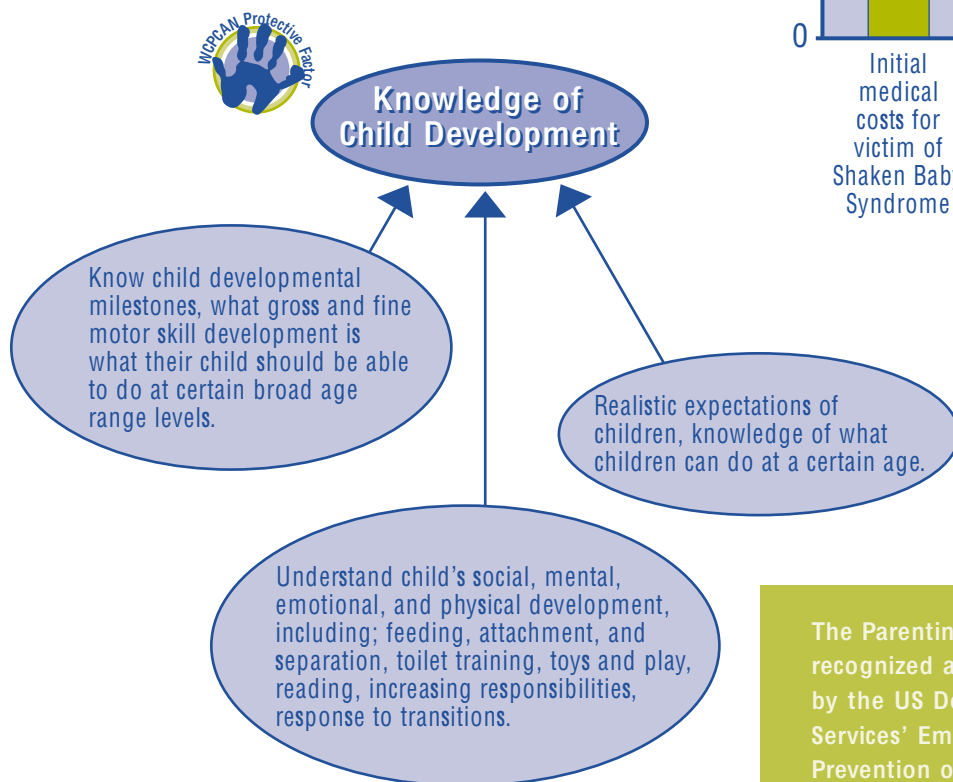
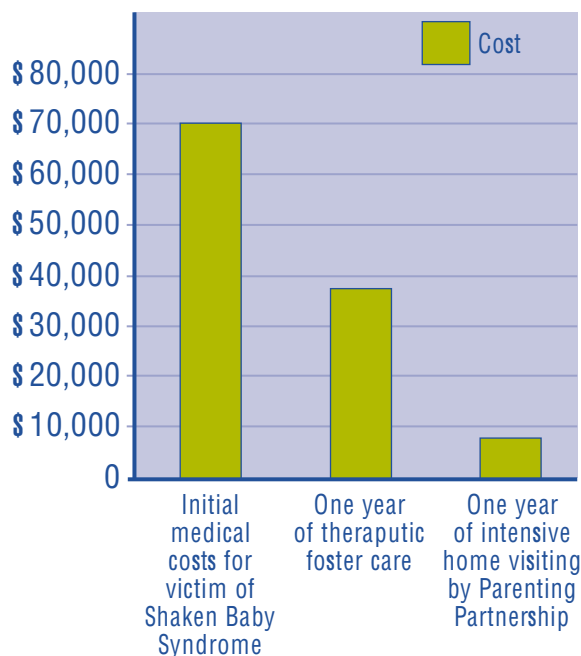
- New brain imaging surveys and other experiments have shown that child abuse can cause permanent damage to the neural structure and function of the developing brain itself.
- Healthy bonding between a child and his or her parents/caregivers actually creates a chemical buffer in the child's brain that protects it from 'shutting down' in reaction to stress. A shut down brain is a brain that isn't learning.

A WPCAN Investment

Mary Bridge Hospital Parenting Partnership, Tacoma

The Parenting Partnership is a home visitation program that engages and supports low-income parents of infants who have been in the hospital's neonatal intensive care units. Most of these infants will suffer life-long medical conditions that may inhibit parent-child attachment and exacerbate feelings of loss and stress for their parents. Research shows these dynamics to be significant risk factors for child abuse and neglect. The Parenting Partnership is based on a model developed by Dr. Martha Farrell Erickson of the University of Minnesota.

Parenting Partnership



The Parenting Partnership was nationally recognized as a Reported Effective Program by the US Department of Health and Human Services' Emerging Practices in the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.

[4] Partnership and Collaboration

WCPCAN develops and leads Washington's statewide network of community-based prevention-focused family resource and support programs. To accomplish this, we maintain partnerships with a broad range of private and



public organizations that share common goals related to child abuse prevention and family strengthening and support.

The primary purpose of these partnerships is to identify priorities and opportunities for sharing and leveraging resources. Resource leveraging helps develop the continuum of needed supports to make sure they are available and accessible to all families in all Washington communities.

Washington State Fathering Coalition

Fathers have often been 'missing in action' from programs serving children. Yet research shows they play unique and critical roles in promoting healthy child development. The Washington State Fathering Coalition responds to this reality by focusing on promoting healthy father-child relationships and increasing positive male involvement in the lives of children.

Under WCPCAN's leadership, a diverse group of partners has come together as a coalition to strategize and pool efforts. Results so far include a well attended conference, new resource materials

and statewide trainings. With the help of the Boeing Company, a website that will provide the electronic hub for ongoing work has been developed. These early accomplishments are the result of the power that is unleashed through partnering and collaboration.

For more information, visit the Washington State Fathering Coalition website at www.fatheringthefuture.org.

Respite and Crisis Care Coalition of Washington (RCCCW)

Formed with WCPCAN's support in 2001, the RCCCW has become a prime mover in Washington's efforts to improve the quality and accessibility of respite care throughout our state. Coalition members represent multiple disciplines and many public and private sector organizations. The committee's work has positioned Washington State to maximize the benefit received from anticipated passage of the federal Lifespan Respite Care Act.



Photo courtesy of flashlightimages.com

Effective Prevention Saves Money

Our focus on outcome evaluation and investment in research-tested approaches has significantly improved child abuse prevention practice over the years. The outcomes reported by WCPCAN funded programs show that these programs make a significant difference in the lives of vulnerable families and contribute to the prevention of child abuse and neglect in Washington.

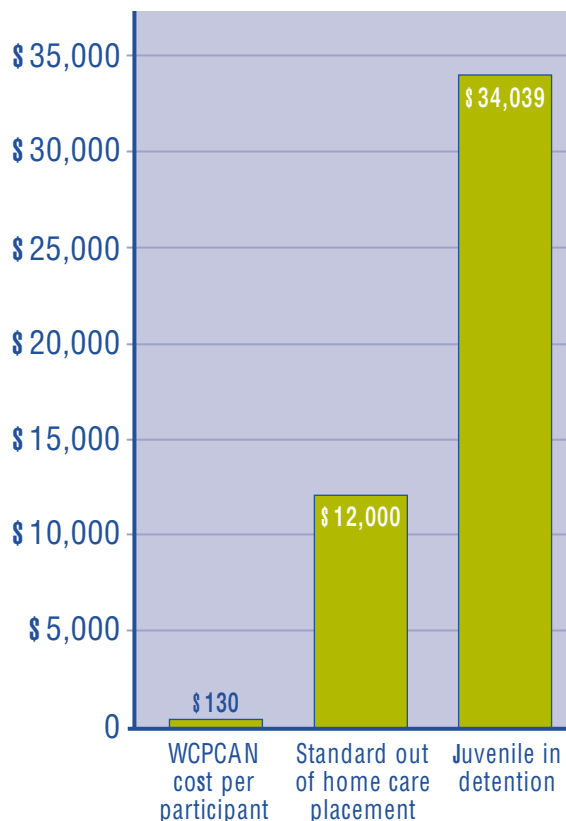
In contrast to the high cost of foster care and other interventions that are a consequence of child abuse and neglect, investment in programs that focus on assisting parents and families to develop the skills, behaviors and resources necessary to prevent abuse and neglect seem a wise investment choice.

Cost Benefit

A 1998 Rand Institute report asked the question, “Might government funds invested early in the lives of some children result in compensating decreases in government expenditures? The answer to this question is YES.”

But, for every dollar spent in the US on the treatment of child abuse, only one penny is spent on prevention.

Annual Cost Comparison:
Prevention vs. Intervention



The Measurement Challenge

It is difficult to accurately measure the dollar value of prevention. The challenge is illustrated by thinking of how prevention works in the field of health care.

Take the example of polio, which reached epidemic proportions in the US in the 1940's and 50's. In 1955, a breakthrough occurred when, after massive field trials involving nearly two-million children, the Salk vaccine was shown to be effective in preventing the disease. Today, polio has almost completely disappeared as a health issue in the U.S.

While we can get close to knowing what it cost to ensure that children got the Salk vaccine, and we can estimate with some confidence what treatment might have cost had these children become ill, it's still impossible to say exactly what the financial

payoff of this prevention effort was. Would every child who didn't get the vaccine have been exposed to polio and fallen ill? Would the disease have run the exact same course and cost the same amount in every child who did contract it? We can't know. But we DO know that the Salk vaccine saved lives and saved money.

Cost Savings

Estimating the cost savings from child abuse and neglect prevention is even more difficult. For one thing, we've never invested in child abuse prevention to the same



degree. We've never tried a universal prevention effort comparable to what we did in response to polio in the 50's.

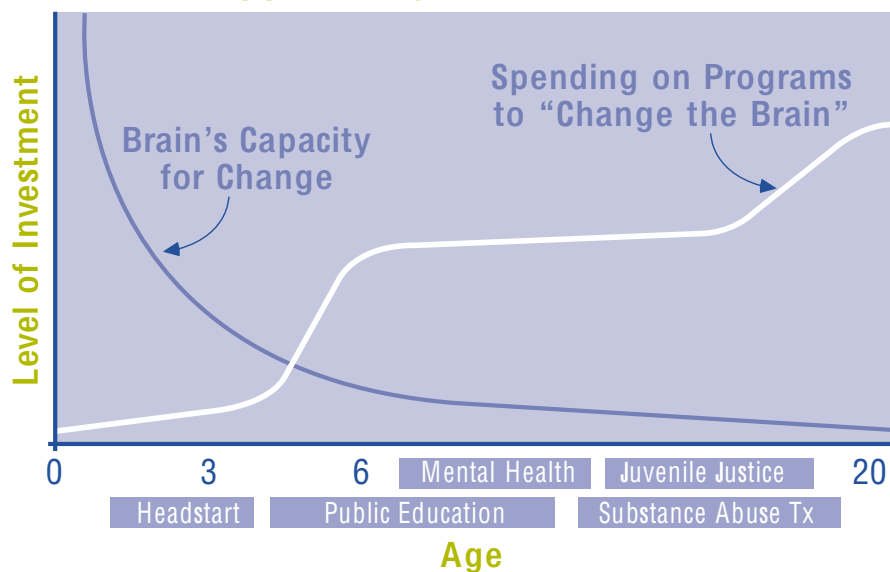
Preventing child abuse and neglect is a more complex proposition than preventing a specific disease. Over time, any number of factors can combine to put a child at risk. Unlike the polio vaccine, we can't say with much certainty what the full, lifelong results of a specific prevention strategy might be. It's the challenge of proving a negative: how do you ever know for sure that something you did in Year A prevented a bad result you otherwise might have had in Year Z?

Will every abused child end up in prison? No. Will a child for whom prevention services have been provided be far less likely to end up in the criminal justice system? Yes. Can we ever put an exact dollar figure on the difference? Probably not.

But we do know some of the costs involved and where money IS going, and the conclusions become clear.

- Every \$1 invested in quality early childhood care and education – which includes educating and supporting parents and caregivers – saves \$7 by increasing the likelihood that children will be literate, employed, and enrolled in post-secondary education, and less likely to be school dropouts, dependent on welfare, or arrested for criminal activity or delinquency.
- Every \$1 invested in long-term intensive home visiting saves \$3 in costs for government assistance and criminal justice costs. Even this fairly expensive prevention program can pay for itself in the first four years of a child's life.
- The average cost to the state of Washington for caring for a child in foster care is more than \$1,000 per month. Effective prevention and early intervention services can prevent removal of children from their homes.

The Mismatch Between Opportunity and Investment



Bruce D. Perry M.D., Ph.D.

The Challenges Ahead

WCP CAN has spent over 20 years wrestling with the challenge of achieving a greater public commitment to child abuse and neglect prevention. Along the way, there have been some important lessons.

“

Today, in the United States, despite the well-documented adverse effects of domestic, community, school and media violence, we continue to seek short-term and simplistic answers. In order to minimize the many destructive pathways that come from violence in childhood, we need to dedicate resources of time, energy and money to these complex problems.

— Bruce D. Perry, MD, Ph.D.

”

We Know What Works

Prevention science has come a long way. Research has proven the effectiveness of certain programs. The outcomes produced by the programs we fund back up these findings and add to our knowledge of what's promising.

Research has also created new tools. Today we know much more about what helps community initiatives succeed in achieving goals like preventing child abuse and neglect. Studies of successful social marketing campaigns show how to change the community norms that influence individual behaviors. And advances in brain research have added enormously to our understanding of how to promote optimal child development.

It's not all science. Some of the progress has resulted from practice. In response to changing community conditions, better informed, more culturally sensitive and appropriate approaches are being shaped to create resources truly needed by

and useful to communities. Empowered parents are providing potent quality control, demanding services that better serve their needs.

Focusing our Efforts

Research and practice have also produced some important insights into where we need to focus child abuse and neglect prevention efforts in Washington.

Increasing Understanding

Biases about child abuse and neglect represent a fundamental challenge to success. Many people believe that abuse and neglect only happens to 'someone else's children.' They believe abuse is extreme and not preventable. There is a direct connection between this misunderstanding and an unwillingness to invest in prevention services, even as maltreatment cuts across class lines, is damaging when not extreme, and is amenable to prevention.

Public awareness and education to lay the foundation for broad-based civic engagement is essential. We need media and community engagement strategies that begin to break down the barriers that lack of knowledge and understanding create.

Until we believe we CAN prevent child abuse and neglect, we won't.

Building on Strengths

Researchers who talk to families know they too rarely feel empowered by their interactions with existing systems, and that services too rarely





build on strengths. The national family support movement, of which WCPCAN was an early leader in Washington, seeks to change this reality with approaches built on family and community strengths.

We need to continue to promote a family support approach in Washington in order to change the policies, programs, and practices that undermine - rather than empower - families. If we don't, we'll continue to find that supports offered to families not only miss the mark, but risk leaving increasing frustration and hopelessness in their wake.

Integrating Systems

There is widespread recognition that the systems set up to assist families at risk too often operate in isolation from one another. It is less well recognized that the particular needs of children are often overlooked in systems focused on adults. Systems and services need to be integrated to address family needs holistically, with child well-being at the center.

Thinking Long Term

Research has shown that the most entrenched problems are multigenerational in nature. Parenting is learned. Changing entrenched behavioral patterns that have existed in certain families for generations is a challenge that requires commitment over the long haul. So is changing a culture to better support healthy child development.

In order to address these realities, we need a systemic approach that is sustained over time. When we think long term, we'll find that our investment strategies produce far better results.

In a survey of police officers conducted by Fight Crime, Invest in Kids, nine out of 10 officers agreed, "America could sharply reduce crime if government invested more in programs to help children and youth get a good start. If America does not pay for greater investments in programs to help children and youth now, we will all pay far more later in crime, welfare, and other costs."

These police officers got it right. Prevention does pay.

New Opportunities

Focus on Results and Efficiency

We are in a time when big questions are being asked about government. Well established, highly regarded public programs – Head Start, for example – are under new scrutiny. Speaking from various perspectives, many express doubts about whether government can be trusted or has the right priorities. Results and efficiency are very much the focus.

In Washington, these questions about the role of government are being raised in the context of our current economic challenges. Welcome or not, this combination of factors forces us to begin thinking differently about traditional ways of doing business.

Investing for Maximum Impact

Focusing on efficiency and results and being required to revisit some of our assumptions creates an opportunity. While the pressure is great to keep spending at the far end of the prevention-intervention continuum, there is a compelling case for the better economic value that prevention represents. In this changed environment, perhaps the message will get through: increasing our prevention investments will pay off in a big way over time.

Some argue that the state can no longer afford the ‘luxury’ of prevention – that prevention should be left to the private sector. But no one stands to benefit more from an aggressive prevention agenda than does state government and the taxpayers who support it. Foster care, crime, school failure, substance abuse, poor health, and teen pregnancy are expensive. If we can reduce those costs, we all benefit.

Doing Business Differently

The forces at work in the current environment also create the opportunity to accelerate system integration. When we figure out how to better reach across systems, we will significantly increase our ability to leverage knowledge and skills. The result? Greater impact and reduced costs.

Our current challenges can also help drive government toward the changes it needs to make in order to better engage community support and partnerships - especially when it comes to strengthening families and protecting children. Partnerships that reach deep into the community are critical. The pressure in the current system opens up new possibilities to forge these relationships.

A Final Word

A Cause Worth Our Best Effort

Preventing child abuse and neglect is not a simple matter. Many factors combine to influence a child’s developmental course or a family’s ability to raise healthy children. There’s no ‘one size fits all’ strategy, or any magic bullets. Systems do not change easily. Affecting public awareness and understanding is daunting.

But preventing child abuse and neglect is a cause worth our best effort.



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Tim Gahm, Program Manager
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Chris Jamieson, Public Affairs Manager
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Tamara White, Office Assistant

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Additional copies of this *Ounce of Prevention* report may be ordered by e-mailing wcpcan@dshs.wa.gov or by phoning us at (206) 464-6151.

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Washington Council for Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect
318 1st Ave. S., Suite 310 / MS N17-7
Seattle, WA 98104-2597

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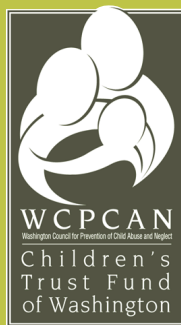
Dream no small dreams for
they have no power to move
the hearts of men.

— Goethe

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